BALD MOUNTAIN AIR SERVICES HIT WITH $500,000+ DOL FINE

News / Airlines

The US Department of Labour's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has ordered Bald Mountain Air Service (Homer) to pay over USD500,000 in back pay, interest and compensatory damages to a pilot it fired in 2012 after he raised repeated safety concerns at work ranging from missed drug tests for pilots to forged or falsified records.

The OSHA says the Alaska-based operator had violated federal whistleblower laws with its actions against the employee who had been suspended, then fired and ostracized from the close-knit industry.

"Voicing safety concerns at work should never cost someone their job," OSHA Acting Regional Administrator, Galen Blanton, said. "This employee should be hired back, compensated and treated fairly from here on out."

The airline has now been ordered to: pay the employee back wages at the rate of USD350 per day from November 2012 until he receives a bona fide offer of reinstatement; Pay the employee USD100,000 in compensatory damages for pain, suffering and mental distress; expunge his

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employment records of any reference to his stance as a so-called 'whistleblower', and any reference to the adverse actions taken against him; Not retaliate or discriminate against him in any manner, nor convey to a third party any mention of the employee's protected activity.

BMAS, which has also been ordered to post a notice to employees about federal whistleblower protections in both its Anchorage Ted Stevens and Homer facilities, has thirty days to appeal the ruling.

The carrier specializes in ad-hoc charter flights to remote parts of Alaska using two DHC-3 Turbo Otters, a single DHC-6 and a single Beech (twin turboprop) King Air 200.

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